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CLAIM SUMMARY DOCUMENT:[Claims 1-21 (Canceled)]

1.
Claim ~~22~~ (New) An electrical switching device comprising:

a microrelay switch which is arranged in a current path and has microrelay cells connected in series as a voltage divider and connected in parallel as a current divider, having a current sensor which detects ^athe current flowing in the current path;

an evaluation device for receiving and evaluating the current signals detected by the current sensor and for forming a tripping signal, which acts on the microrelay switch, if the current being carried in the current path exceeds a threshold value; and

a short-circuit current limiter arranged in the current path such that the short-circuit current limiter is connected in series with the microrelay switch; wherein

the switching device is designed such that the microrelay switch opens in response to the tripping signal for small overcurrents that are greater than the threshold value, and, in the event of large overcurrents, the short-circuit current limiter limits these overcurrents to currents which can be interrupted by the microrelay switch.

2.
Claim ~~23~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~, wherein the evaluation device causes the microrelay switch to respond with a short time delay as a function of the magnitude of any overcurrent.

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^{3.}
Claim 24 (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹/₂₂, wherein the short-circuit current limiter is a fuse link.

^{4.}
Claim 25 (New) The switching device as claimed in claim ¹/₂₂, wherein the short-circuit current limit can be uploaded electrically, and the evaluation device is designed to transmit a second tripping signal to the short-circuit current limiter in the event of large overcurrents.

^{5.}
Claim 26 (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹/₂₂, wherein the short-circuit current limiter is a power breaker.

^{6.}
Claim 27 (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹/₂₂, wherein the short-circuit current limiter is a PTC thermistor.

^{7.}
Claim 28 (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ⁶/₂₇, wherein the PTC thermistor contains a PTC polymer material.

^{8.}
Claim 29 (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ⁶/₂₇, wherein the PTC thermistor contains a PTC metal material.

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Claim ⁹~~30~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed claim in ¹~~22~~, wherein the evaluation device is designed for receiving and evaluating signals from a first current sensor, which detects the current through the current path, and from a second current sensor, which detects a current through a second current path, by comparing them with one another and opening the microrelay switch in response to a result of ^{an}~~the~~ evaluation.

Claim ¹⁰~~31~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~, wherein the current sensor is a total current sensor which detects a total current through the current path and through at least one second adjacent current path, and the evaluation device is designed for receiving and evaluating a signal from the total current sensor and for opening the microrelay switch in response to that signal.

Claim ¹¹~~32~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~, wherein at least one current sensor is part of the switching device and is in the form of a Hall sensor.

Claim ¹²~~33~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹¹~~32~~, wherein the evaluation device and the Hall sensor or sensors are integrated on a chip.

Claim ¹³~~34~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹¹~~32~~, wherein the microrelay switch, the evaluation device and the Hall sensor or sensors are integrated on one chip.

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Claim ^{14.}~~35~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~, wherein the microrelay switch, the evaluation device and, possibly, the Hall sensor or sensors are each integrated as chips on a circuit board.

Claim ^{15.}~~36~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~, wherein the microrelay switch and the evaluation device are integrated on one chip.

Claim ^{16.}~~37~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~, wherein an electronic response monitoring device is integrated, with the microrelay switch, on one chip.

Claim ^{17.}~~38~~ (New) The electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~, wherein a timer circuit is integrated, with the microrelay switch, on one chip.

Claim ^{18.}~~39~~ (New) An electric motor switching and protection system having an electrical switching device as claimed in claim ¹~~22~~.